PLANT FACT SHEET

Hibiscus mutabilis L.

GENUS *Hibiscus* **FAMILY** Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Rose of Sharon, Confederate rose

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Root, Flowers, Leaves - tea

The root is edible but it contains a lot of fibre.
The leaves are eaten. They contain rutin.
The leaves are boiled and eaten with oil and salt.
The flowers are cooked and eaten or fried with egg.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub which loses its leaves during the year. It grows to 3 m high and spreads to 2m across. The stem is erect and branching. The stem is covered with soft, star shaped hairs. The leaves are large and oval and divided like fingers on a hand and have 3-7 pointed lobes. The leaves can be 17 cm long. The flowers are funnel shaped and white and turn deep pink in a day. They can be double or single. They are 10 cm across. There are some named varieties.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows best in light to medium, well drained soils. It needs an open sunny position. It needs a humus rich, fertile soil. It is damaged by frost and cannot tolerate drought. It needs a temperature above 13°C. It suits hardiness zones 8-10. In Sichuan and Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by cuttings or seed. The germination of seed is fairly rapid and plants can be transplanted. They can also be raised by air-layering.

NOTES

There are about 220 Hibiscus species. The leaves are used in medicine as an expectorant.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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